

# PTSO News

October 2005  
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Newsletter of the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools Parent-Teacher-Student Organization

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RPTSO Web Site: <http://abrptso.ab.mec.edu/>

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## FROM THE CHAIRS:

**Beth Petr – ABRHS Co-Chair**

**Jan Couch – RJGJH Co-Chair**

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Our first PTSO Forum of the year featured presentations by our two Principals about what lies ahead for 2005–2006. This was followed by representatives from three local organizations that support our schools – the Regional School Committee, ABSAF (Acton Boxborough Student Activities Fund), and CAFY (Community Alliance for Youth).

**Steve Donovan, Principal of ABRHS**, began by introducing our new Assistant Principal, JoAnn Campbell, who is responsible for our freshmen, as well as our sophomores with last names starting with H–O. Welcome from the PTSO! Steve welcomed parents and guardians of the 49 “school choice” students now at ABRHS. This decision was made by our School Committee, and resulted in up to 50 non-Acton or Boxborough students joining us, for which we receive \$5,000 per student in state aid that comes out of the aid earmarked for the student’s home district. This additional \$250,000 allowed the high school to hire five more teachers to slow the increase in class sizes, which are the largest in ABRHS history.

On 9/23/05, ABRHS had enrolled:

- 502 freshmen,
- 464 sophomores,
- 452 juniors,
- 436 seniors

for a total of 1,854 students. (Most choice students are freshmen.) Last year, there were 1,725 students, and the year before there were 1,683. These increases are being dramatically felt by students as well as staff.

A related issue involves the supervision of students when they are not enrolled in a class. A chart was distributed showing the number of students who are “free” during each of the 8 periods of the school day. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, during Periods 6 and/or 7, there are almost 700 students who are not assigned to a class. This means they could be at lunch, in a study hall, in the library, in one of the student centers, in a gym (if it is supervised) or outside. If they have privileges, older students can leave the campus.

Campus monitors are crucial for this supervision. Unfortunately, funding for two of these positions was lost this year because the building project was completed. The result is

that there are fewer supervised (and therefore permissible) places for students to go when they have free time.

One student commented, “I don’t know what they’re going to do in the winter when there is no room to eat lunch and it’s too cold to go outside. It’s already so crowded in the cafeteria now and lots of kids are outside. There aren’t a lot of places where we can go.”

Although the new school was built to accommodate up to 2,050 students, the funding for staff is not there.

Although Steve was very upbeat about how smoothly the start of this school year went, and the number of wonderful new teachers that have joined us at ABRHS, he did say, “Some class sizes are bordering on an unacceptable size, and we face some really difficult challenges with no override for the next school year.”

**RJG Principal Craig Hardimon** began with a listing of new staff members at the JH. Megan Hatt, assistant principal, comes to us from the Framingham school system, where she held the positions of math teacher and assistant principal. Other new faces include: Michael Balulescu; Social Studies, Audra Kaplan; Computer Literacy, Julianne Locke, part-time psychologist, and Cathy Loebs; part-time nurse.

For the second year, team assignments were posted at the school and on the web prior to the first day of school. Use of student ID numbers for confidentiality will continue in the future.

The first day of school for 7<sup>th</sup> grade students went smoothly including a BBQ, where DARE officer, Jim Goodemote and Mr. Hardimon, flipped hot dogs and burgers for the entire class. 7<sup>th</sup> grade students also participated in team building activities, and attended an assembly. The second day of school included the 8<sup>th</sup> grade class and ran as well as the first day.

The second week of school included a fire drill with new traffic patterns, which were conducted without any issues. Another new safety program is the locking of all doors around

the building limiting access of students and visitors through the main entrance. All staff members are now equipped with keys to gain entry at all doors. Bicycle racks have therefore been relocated closer to the front entrance.

After school activities are ramping up with 82 students involved in boys and girls soccer teams, 36 girls participating on the field hockey teams, and 70 boys and girls on the cross country team. Other activities and clubs, including Student Council, are underway. Information for all activities are included in the daily announcements.

Two drives have taken place in the JH. Proceeds from the 7-red team RJG t-shirts and sweatshirts sale as well as a pajama drive were directed to the Katrina relief effort .

Academic and Social Integrity continues to be of primary focus, and making these issues a fabric of the school. Academic Integrity of not cheating, “doing the right thing, and proper use of Internet information will be part of the effort. Social Integrity is also important. Even though there is a low incidence of teasing and bullying, there is still room to improve and reduce the numbers. The staff will continue to work on a plan and course of action to integrate these issues into the everyday life of RJG students.

RJG’s student population has grown from 917 (2004–2005) to 956. Each 7<sup>th</sup> grade team has approximately 125 students with an average class size of 25. 8<sup>th</sup> grade teams average 113 students, and due to leveling in languages and math, class size is as much as 29 in some instances. Since optimal team size is 90–100, the current average team size continues to challenge the staff and administration of RJG with a concern of losing the ability to provide appropriate support and communication meet for all students.

Mr. Hardimon then responded to questions from the audience regarding the cafeteria, the moment of silence, and scheduling.

1. Cafeteria/Lunch. Two teams have lunch together each day, and there will be some “mixing” of teams during the year. Student Council is looking into other “mix it up” activities. Students cannot leave the cafeteria with any food/beverages.
2. There is a moment of silence every morning and teachers and students are expected to respect this program.
3. The schedule for those academic classes that coincide with lunch periods will vary depending upon the daily calendar

### **Acton Boxborough Student Activity Fund**

Jack Boyles, president of ABSAF, provided an update of this very generous organization as they embark on their 25<sup>th</sup> year. Their primary focus of raising funds for extracurricular programs includes a goal for this year of \$100,000. Their 22 member board is comprised of parents, students, and community members. The quality of education is not limited to just the classroom, but outside as well. Past funding has provided uniforms, a piano, funding for the academic decathlon, high jump pit, buses for events, proscenium circus, and JH productions to name a few. It was also noted that all

stipends for activity supervisors have been cut from the appropriated budget and ABSAF now funds these positions. To find out more about ABSAF please go to [absafo@yahoo.com](mailto:absafo@yahoo.com).

### **Community Alliance For Youth (CAFY)**

Linda Minkoff, CAFY co-chair, expressed that parent education is the key to their success. With funding provided through grants and donations, CAFY organizes and supports programs educating both parents and teachers, recognizing the value of parent and child communication.

On October 11<sup>th</sup> CAFY will present Dave Marcus, author of “What It Takes to Pull Me Through”. The program is geared for parents and teens in grades 9–12, and will take place in the JH auditorium at 7 p.m. Stay turned for the AB Student Panel Forums, where students will speak candidly and directly to parents.

The Red Flags Booklet was sent to all households with children in 6<sup>th</sup> grade and higher. If you are new to the towns of Acton or Boxborough, please feel free to pick up a copy at your child’s school.

For more information about CAFY, joining their email loop, or making a donation, please go to <http://www.cafy.net/>.

– Beth and Jan

### **PTSO Informational Email List for Families**

The PTSO email list has a new look this year! We have switched to Constant Contact. If you never signed up for the PTSO emails and would like to, please go to our website and click on the PTSO EMAILS link: <http://abrptso.ab.mec.edu> You will be asked for your child’s Class (Year of High School graduation). Constant Contact will allow you to change or delete your own email address at any time. It will also allow us to send messages to a particular Class, as well as only send one message if you have children in more than one Class.

These messages will be occasional reminders, clarifications, and last minute requests for assistance from the PTSO. They are not official “school” notices and will not contain essential information required for all families. You do not HAVE to be on this list, but it is a simple way to keep in touch with school happenings, and ask questions. There is no cost.

### **PTSO Membership Dues**

The PTSO appreciates dues at any time of the year, so if your form got lost in the pile of September papers, you can still contribute. Dues are the PTSO’s main source of funding and primarily cover the monthly production and mailing of this newsletter, several scholarships, and some funding given to our two principals for needs they feel are top priority at R.J. Grey and ABRHS. Per family annual dues are \$25 and a copy of the form can be found on the PTSO website at <http://abrptso.ab.mec.edu>. Thank you to those families who have already sent in their dues.

# ABRHS NEWS

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## FROM THE HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPAL

**Steve Donovan**

Our year at A-B is off to a good start. As you know, it's a very busy place. We have over 1850 students at A-B this year, including 120 new students, some through the School Choice Program and some who have moved to the area or have come to A-B from private schools. Students and teachers seem settled into their classes, and during the week of September 12 we had a two-day Activities Fair during which many of the school clubs and organizations kicked off their year. Our fall athletic program is also in full swing.

Students and staff have been involved with others in the community to raise funds and collect supplies for victims of Hurricane Katrina. It was impressive to see an alcove full of bags transformed into over 500 boxes of sorted items ready to be loaded onto a truck bound for Louisiana – all in a matter of 48 hours!

### **Back to School Night**

I hope that most of you will be able to join us for Back to School Night on Wednesday, October 19. The welcoming session will take place in the auditorium at 7:00. We especially invite parents of freshmen and new students to this portion of the evening. Parents attending this session should arrive in the building between 6:45 and 6:50 to pick up their students' schedules and to be seated. Auditorium seating will be available on a first come, first served basis. Student Center East will accommodate some overflow from the auditorium. Parents not planning to attend the opening session should arrive in the building by about 7:15.

Parents will follow their child's schedule for a simulated school day beginning at 7:35. Handouts containing a school map and a timetable for the evening will be distributed along with student schedules at four locations as follows:

- Grade 9 schedules will be in Student Center East.
- Grade 10 schedules will be in Student Center West.
- Grade 11 schedules will be in the upper hallway in the west wing (inside the door next to the pool/gym entrance) at the top of the circular staircase.
- Grade 12 schedules will be in the first floor hallway of the west wing at the bottom of the circular staircase.

Alternatively, parents can get a copy of their child's schedule from their son or daughter. We will be following Day B of the six-day cycle (days are designated A through F). If you bring your own schedule, be sure you have room numbers and an indication of which wing each classroom is in.

Back to School Night is an opportunity for parents to meet the teachers and to hear about the expectations in your child's classes. During a student's lunch or other free period, parents are invited to visit the Counseling Center and library where information tables will be set up (PTSO, ABSAF, Project Graduation and other organizations) and to enjoy refreshments in the Commons (cafeteria) area. Because of the popularity of this event and the size of our student body, parking close to the school is at a premium for Back to School Night. Plenty of

parking is available at the Junior High and at the Parker Damon Building. Please allow time to walk from these locations to the high school building. Monitors and student volunteers will be on hand to assist you in finding your way around the building.

Any parents who need special accommodations at Back to School Night (elevator access, translation of information, etc.) should contact Deb Trentsch in the Main Office (ext. 4303).

### **School store**

Our school store is a multi-function operation located beside the Main Office in the new front lobby. Parents who need to drop off messages or items for students should go to the store. The store carries school supplies, snacks and a line of A-B clothing items and is open from 7:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. Please check it out at Back to School Night. Families of underclassmen interested in purchasing a yearbook should place an order at the school store during October. (Seniors do not have to order a yearbook since it is covered by their senior class dues.)

### **Student Handbook**

The Student Handbook which students received on the first day of school contains a wealth of information. Parents may want to read their student's copy or to look at the version on the school's web site (<http://ab.mec.edu/abrhs>).

### **Early release dates**

The School Committee has approved two early release days for the high school to enable the staff to work during these afternoons on curriculum-related issues. These dates are Friday, November 18 and Friday, April 7.

### **AB.mec.edu/abrhs**

We continue to try to post as much useful information as possible on the school's web site. Daily announcements can be found by clicking the School Announcements link on the high school home page.

### **Parking at A-B**

Parents and other visitors should park in marked visitor spaces which are near school entrances. Campus monitors are available to assist with any other parking problems.

Information on the current parking and traffic plan, which includes parent drop off and pickup instructions, is available on the school web site. We thank parents and students for their cooperation in keeping our parking lots safe.

### **Freshman study**

This year, ninth graders will have an opportunity to apply to be excused from freshman study hall at the end of the **first term**. After receiving first term grades, freshmen who have a satisfactory academic record, perfect attendance in all of their classes (including study hall), no behavior incidents and

parental permission can apply to be excused from freshman study using the form that will be distributed through freshman study halls. Completed forms should be returned to Assistant Principal JoAnn Campbell for review. Students whose applications are approved can spend their free period in any supervised area of the school (library, student centers, commons, etc.).

Students who either choose not to apply at the end of Term I or are not granted permission to be excused from study hall can apply at the end of Term II.

– Steve Donovan

### **Prudential Spirit of Community Award**

Students involved in conducting a community service activity are invited to submit an application for the Prudential Spirit of Community Award. This award will be given to two Acton-Boxborough students who in the past year have participated in significant self-initiated volunteer work in the community. A-B's honorees will be eligible to compete for the Massachusetts Youth Volunteer of the Year award. More information and applications are available from Judi Bowes in the Counseling Center. Information is also available on the Prudential web site ([www.prudential.com/community/spirit/awards](http://www.prudential.com/community/spirit/awards)). Applications must be picked up by October 14 and submitted by October 27.

### **Help Students with Career Exploration**

Would you like to help students learn about careers and preparation for work? There are many ways in which parents can help the school with its career exploration program. Parents can volunteer to host job shadowing students for one-day visits at their place of work, speak to interested students as part of our career speaker program, offer internship or apprenticeship programs, or help in other ways. This fall we are particularly looking for parents with biology-related careers or connections in this field. Parents who are interested can call or e-mail Kay Steeves (978-264-4700, ext. 3444, [ksteeves@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:ksteeves@mail.ab.mec.edu)) or Bruce Oetinger (ext. 3497, [boetinger@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:boetinger@mail.ab.mec.edu)) or talk to one of them at Back to School Night.

### **Academic Support Center**

The Academic Support Center, located in Rm. 242S, provides support for students who need assistance with homework or other class assignments, study and organizational skills, and test taking strategies. It is a quiet environment staffed by teachers and approximately 32 Peer Tutors. The Peer Tutors have been trained to work with their peers in a variety of subjects and are eager to help in any way they can. Students can commit to regular support or can use the ASC services as needed. Please encourage your son or daughter to avail themselves of this valuable resource. Contact Jacalyn Starr if you have specific questions or want more information.

### **“Wiley and the Hairy Man” Offers Great Theater for Halloween**

*Wiley and the Hairy Man*, the fall play for Acton Boxborough High School, features a spine-tingling folk tale from the South adapted for the stage by Suzan Zeder. The show is directed by new Proscenium Circus advisor, Linda Potter, with performances in the high school auditorium on Friday, October 28<sup>th</sup> at 7:30 p.m. and Saturday, October 29<sup>th</sup> at 3:00 and 7:30 p.m. Kids are welcome to wear Halloween costumes to this matinee.

Set deep within a swamp, the story centers around a young fatherless boy named Wiley (Craig Reid), his conjure-woman Mama (Kate Hanselman), his faithful hound dog (Kate Voss), and the Hairy Man (Ben Cesare) who haunts Wiley's days and dreams. Using rhythmic movement, the Swamp Spirits (Matt Bauer, Nicole Boyajian, Lauren Brooks, Kate Conoby, Brianna Dickey, Brian Herdeg, Becca Iandoli, Kate Jones, Michael Kontoff, Andre Lenox, Garret Richardson, Eric Sheehan, Maddy Smith, Meghan Veno and Roger Viola) will create the mystery of the swamp, aided by eerie sounds created by Jeanie Furlan and Cesar Garde. In an exciting duel of wits, Wiley learns to rely upon his own resources as he conquers two villains—the big, bad Hairy Man and his own fear.

Spooky monologues by Beth Gillespie, Brian Herdeg and Andre Lenox will round out this one act play to just over an hour of scary fun.

All tickets are \$8. They are available online at [www.MKTix.com](http://www.MKTix.com) and at these locations: Roche Bros., West Acton Market, and Tedeschi Market (Rte. 2A). Additionally, students will be selling tickets most lunches the week before the show. Ordering information for ABSAF pass holders and A-B staff is on the website, [www.ABDrama.org](http://www.ABDrama.org). Tickets will also be available at the door.

For more information, please consult the website or contact Pat Herdeg, 978-263-0718.

### **Senior Recognition Ads in the Yearbook**

A Senior Recognition Ad is an opportunity for parents/guardians to congratulate their child on his/her graduation in the Torch, the ABRHS Yearbook.

The deadline for Senior Recognition Ads is **NOVEMBER 10**.

The advertisement will appear at the end of the yearbook and could contain photos, messages, congratulations or something of your own design. We can keep your advertisement secret until the books are distributed in the Spring. Ads range in cost from \$35 for a single line message, to a quarter page (\$65 - \$85), to a half page (\$100 - \$130).

For more information, see the information for seniors section of the school website, or contact Yearbook Advisor Jane Starr at [jstarr@mail.ab.mec.edu](mailto:jstarr@mail.ab.mec.edu)

## ABSAF Phonathon Coming Up

On Sunday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, Wednesday, October 26<sup>th</sup> and Sunday, October 30<sup>th</sup> from 6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., student volunteers will be calling members of the community in a Phonathon to benefit ABSAF, The Acton-Boxborough Student Activities Fund. The calls will be made from the Acton-Boxborough Regional High School Counseling Center.

Over one hundred students are expected to give their time to make calls to those in the community who have not yet made a pledge to support the 2005–2006 ABSAF campaign. Supporting a broad range of extracurricular activities is a challenge for us all, particularly when school finances are under pressure forcing some communities to completely eliminate extracurricular programs. Although taxes, gate receipts and activity fees help to fund these programs, revenue from these sources is not enough to cover the total cost. ABSAF was founded in 1981 to help bridge the gap. Since that time, the organization has been making a significant difference in the number and quality of extracurricular activities at the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools.

Thanks to the generous support of the community, the schools have been able to create and maintain a range of high quality, diverse, and vibrant extracurricular programs that help students to gain self-esteem and develop leadership and teamwork skills. ABSAF supports activities as varied as sports programs (junior high to varsity), performing arts groups (band, chorus and theatre), academic teams (math team, science team, speech and debate team, and academic decathlon), and the community outreach group. Among other things, it helps to pay for transportation, materials, printing, and uniforms.

Thanks to the generosity of over 1200 Acton and Boxborough residents, ABSAF received over \$100,000 in donations in 2004–2005, all of which will be used to support extracurricular activities at the Acton-Boxborough Regional Schools. The need has never been greater. If you receive a call from an Acton-Boxborough student during the Phonathon, please respond as generously as you are able.

For a donation of \$150 or more, you and your immediate family will receive an ABSAF pass admitting you to most home extracurricular events sponsored by the regional schools. This includes most sporting events and two tickets to the school plays and musicals at the junior high and the high school for the 2005–2006 academic year. In addition to supporting extracurricular activities, the pass is a bargain for many families. ABSAF passes can be obtained by mail at P.O. Box 662, Acton, Massachusetts 01720. For more information, contact Jack Boyles at 978-405-2528 or [absafinfo@yahoo.com](mailto:absafinfo@yahoo.com), or see our website at <http://www.ab.mec.edu/absaf/absaf.shtml>.

Thank you for supporting ABSAF.

## A-B Friends of Drama Offers Season Tickets, Ads and Memberships

A-B Friends of Drama is a new organization that supports the activities and theater productions of Proscenium Circus (PC), the drama club at A-B. This group works with Linda Potter, new PC advisor, to build audiences for productions, organize fundraising activities, and coordinate volunteers. Money raised this year will help defray some of the costs of student productions, supplement activities of PC, and provide scholarships for seniors.

Proscenium Circus will present four shows this season: *Wiley and the Hairy Man* (Oct. 28, 29); *42<sup>nd</sup> Street*, the musical (Jan 27–29 and Feb 3, 4); *Derelicts, Dancers, Dreamers and Chimps — Four One-Act Plays* (March 24–26); and *An Evening of Student Directed Plays* (May 18). This season offers a great variety of theater for audiences of all ages.

This year, for the first time, **season tickets** are available. Being a season ticket holder is a great way to see all four of the productions—and to be assured of a seat for the musical, which usually sells out. To make the process easy, volunteers will contact season ticket holders to select their preferred night to see each show and their tickets will be held at the door. Adult season tickets are \$30 and Student / Senior season tickets are \$25. Tickets for individual shows will be on sale approximately one month before each performance at Roche Bros. West Acton Market, Tedeschi Market (Rte 2A) and on line at [www.MKTix.com](http://www.MKTix.com).

Friends of Drama is now approaching local businesses to purchase advertising space in our first **season program book**. Designed by David Gerratt of DG Communications, this program will be distributed to audiences at every performance throughout the year. Advertising reservations close on September 30, with artwork due on October 7. For more information about placing an ad, please contact Val McGovern, 266-1660, or [vmcgovern@comcast.net](mailto:vmcgovern@comcast.net).

Finally, anyone who enjoys attending theater is invited to **become a member** of Friends of Drama. Memberships are offered at five levels, from \$15 to \$200 per year. Those joining at \$100 and above will receive one free season ticket; those joining at \$200 and above will receive two free season tickets. And everyone who joins receives a bumper sticker!

Season tickets are now on sale at [www.MKTix.com](http://www.MKTix.com) and through the Friends of Drama website: [www.ABDrama.org](http://www.ABDrama.org). Check the Friends of Drama website for membership information, too—or contact Susan Williams, 978-263-3143, for a brochure.

# RJGJHS NEWS

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## FROM THE PRINCIPAL

**Craig Hardimon**

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When our children are in early elementary school, they are thrilled to tell us about their day and excited to hand us any piece of paper sent home from school. As they get older, they often have less to say about their day and frequently lose forms and documents in the black hole known as, “The backpack!” As the conduit of information, also known as our child, loses efficiency, clear communication between school and home becomes even more important than before.

RJG prides itself on strong home/school communication. All of our daily announcements about events and activities are posted on our website and sent to all parents and guardians who are on our email list. Additionally, there is the weekly issue of *Grey Matters* as well as the monthly issue of *Shades of Grey*.

Nevertheless, there may be times that you have a concern (academic and/or social) regarding your child. If this is the case, please do not wait! Get in touch with your child’s teacher(s) or counselor right away. More often than not, addressing such issues early can resolve problems quickly and easily.

RJG prides itself on strong home/school communication and offers a variety of mechanisms for dialogue. If the topic is relatively simple, email is a very effective mode of communication. Teachers check their email daily and try to respond within 24 hours. If your concern requires a more lengthy response, I encourage you to either call the teacher to talk over the phone or to schedule a meeting with the specific teacher or the entire team. When we work together, students succeed.

Each year, I post a monthly newsletter called, *Middle Years*, on the RJG web site. It is a periodical written by Resources for Educators (Aspen Publishers), specifically for parents of middle level children. Below is an excerpt from the September 2005 edition:

### **Get involved!**

Wondering how to help your child succeed during the middle school years? Being involved in her education is as important now as it was when she was in kindergarten. Here are several ways you can support your youngster’s learning and make a big difference in her school success.

#### **Ask questions**

If you want to know what’s going on at school, take the time to ask your child. If she says, “Nothing,” follow up with a specific question. Example: “What chapter are you discussing in science class?” Talking about school helps your

middle grader see how important it is. Plus, the two of you get a chance to chat.

#### **Expect success**

Tell your child what you expect from him at school—such as hard work, perfect attendance, and consistent study. Challenge him to set goals in his classes. Or suggest that he tackle a difficult topic on his term paper. The important thing is for him to learn, so don’t overemphasize grades. Students achieve more when their efforts are encouraged.

#### **Work together**

If something goes wrong at school, take a deep breath before you contact the teacher. Keep in mind that the teacher wants your child to learn as much as you do. Together, find solutions to the problem. Working calmly through problems will put your middle grader back on the path to learning.

### **BoxTops for Education**

The Student Council and PTSO have teamed up to raise money for R. J. Grey through Box Tops for Education, a program offered to schools by General Mills. It’s a simple way to raise needed funds for our school: clip the Box Tops coupons off of participating products and send them to school with your child to place in the collection box in the R. J. Grey front lobby.

Each Box Top is worth 10¢, and General Mills will send R. J. Grey a check for each coupon redeemed. You can obtain information on Box Tops for Education, including a list of participating products at <http://www.boxtops4education.com>.

# Regional School Calendars

## High School Dates of Interest

- Oct. 4 No school – Rosh Hashanah
- Oct. 5 College Process for Students with Disabilities  
7:00 p.m.
- Oct. 8 SAT & SAT Subject Tests administered
- Oct. 11 No school – Columbus Day holiday
- Oct. 13 No school – Yom Kippur
- Oct. 15 PSAT/NMSQT administered at ABRHS
- Oct. 19 Back to School Night, 7:00 p.m.
- Oct. 21 Hypnotist Program – fundraiser sponsored by  
Student Council, 7:00 p.m.
- Oct. 22 Speech and Debate Tournament at ABRHS
- Oct. 24 School Council Meeting, 6:00 p.m.
- Oct. 25 Career Breakfast – first period
- Oct. 28-29 Fall play, 7:30 p.m. on Fri. & Sat.,  
also 3:00 p.m. on Sat.

## Junior High School Dates of Interest

- Oct. 4 No school – Rosh Hashanah
- Oct. 5 Student Council Meeting, 12:22 p.m.
- Oct. 10 No school – Columbus Day
- Oct. 11 School Council Meeting, 7:00-8:30 p.m.
- Oct. 12 Midterm Reports Mailed
- Oct. 13 No school – Yom Kippur
- Oct. 20 Make Up Picture Day
- Oct. 26 Grade 8 Minuteman Trip
- Oct. 28 Grade 7 Social, 2:30-4:30 p.m.
- Oct. 31 Halloween Dress-Up Day

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## SCHOOL COMMITTEE NEWS

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### FROM THE REGIONAL SCHOOL COMMITTEE

#### **Michael Coppolino, Chair**

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The recent tragedies on the Gulf Coast have consumed much of our attention, and our thoughts continue to be with those affected. As always, our schools and communities at large have responded with generous contributions, raising thousands of dollars, as well as donating food, clothing, and textbooks to help the victims in Louisiana, Alabama and Mississippi.

On September 16, Bill Ryan, Marie Altieri, and I presented Bill Mullin, Chairman of Friends of Leary Field, which donated over \$350K to the cause, with a plaque commemorating the Grand Opening of the New Leary Field. A huge crowd cheered on the A-B Football Colonials to an exciting overtime win over Chelmsford, running the team's record to an amazing 52 consecutive victories, the current State record.

The School Committees have been reviewing revised policies under which the schools are administered. It is an enormous task, which is being spearheaded by Becky Neville and Marie Altieri. We have, thus far, discussed and voted on policies covering "Foundations and Basic Commitments" and "Board Governance and Operations", and in September will have voted on sections including "General School Administration", "Fiscal Management" (which includes fund-raising) and "Support Services", which includes elements pertaining to safety. Once all proposed policies have been approved, a final vote will take place to make the entire set official.

In order to increase and improve our communication with the public, the School Districts have unveiled a new website including an updated School Committee website, which you can find off of the A-B site (<http://ab.mec.edu>) under

"Popular Pages" and "About". Please visit it and give us suggestions for information you would like to view on a regular basis, in addition to our on-going calendar of events, policies (once approved), budgets, and upcoming agendas.

Boxborough is going through its leadership review process since the superintendent/principal and assistant principal left at the end of the school year. One of several options they are considering is Regionalizing K-12. This would mean that the three school districts (Acton K-6, Boxborough K-6, and Acton-Boxborough 7-12) could be combined into a single K-12 School District. There will continue to be meetings to discuss this and other options for the Boxborough Public School District, and all are encouraged to participate.

ABRHS Principal, Steve Donovan, will give his annual education report at the October 6<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting at 7:30 pm in the High School Library. RJ Grey Jr. High School Principal, Craig Hardimon, will give his annual education report at the October 27<sup>th</sup> School Committee meeting at 7:30 pm in the Junior High School Library. The public is always welcome to attend our meetings.

– Michael Coppolino  
Chair, Acton-Boxborough Regional School Committee

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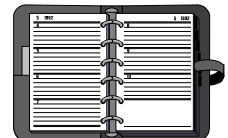
**PTSO News**  
**Acton-Boxborough Regional High School**  
**Acton, MA 01720**

Tuesday, October 18<sup>th</sup>  
PTSO Forum

**Career Explorations  
Opportunities**  
with Anne Kingan, Bruce  
Oetinger, & Kay Steeves

12:00 p.m.  
Acton Memorial Library

## **PTSO CALENDAR**



October 18	Noon	<b>PTSO Forum</b> <b>Career Explorations Opportunities Presentation</b> Anne Kingan, Bruce Oetinger, and Kay Steeves Acton Memorial Library
October 19	7:00 p.m.	<b>ABRHS Back to School Night</b> Acton-Boxborough Regional High School
November 2	7:00 p.m.	<b>PTSO Board Meeting</b> ABR High School Library
November 8	Noon	<b>PTSO Forum</b> Acton Memorial Library

THE DEADLINE FOR ARTICLE SUBMISSION FOR THE NOVEMBER NEWSLETTER IS OCTOBER 14.

This issue is scheduled to be mailed to families on October 27.

Articles for consideration may be sent to [BPetr@verizon.net](mailto:BPetr@verizon.net) or [JCCouch@comcast.net](mailto:JCCouch@comcast.net)